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ABSTRACT

Unlike its white counterpart, the black press has historically exceeded its role of information source. Specialized black media were founded to decry racial conflict and gain civil rights. Only rarely, and secondarily, have black papers achieved commercial success. The purposes of black papers have changed with the society they serve. Ideologies evidenced in "Freedom's Journal," for example, were pro-abolition and anti-colonization; they acquiesced in certain aspects of the status quo and promoted self-improvement strategies among blacks. These ideologies are still seen in the contemporary black press along with a continued militance. Today, however, emphasis is on black heritage and news of African nations. Idealogical differences among black leaders across time can also be linked to the black press. For the vast majority of American blacks living in inner cities, the general media still fail to provide either sufficient black news or a black perspective on the news. That failure explains the development and continued significance of black newspapers. It also explains why the black press can be expected to take a path apart from the general media, as it has throughout black history. (HOD)

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THE IMPATIENT PRESS: PLACING BLACK NEWSPAPERS IN THE IDEOLOGIES OF BLACK PROGRESS

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THE IMPATIENT PRESS: PLACING BLACK NEWSPAPERS IN THE IDEOLOGIES OF BLACK PROGRESS

The role of the general media in America--the daily "white press"-is not deliberately educational in defining social reality, norms and problems. When learning through the media occurs, it is often incidental, unplanned and unconscious for reader and reporter alike (McQuail, 1977). Most reporters in U.S. media view their role as that of neutral observer rather than participant. They prefer to provide "just the facts" for readers to draw their own inferences, rather than offer in-depth analyses, according to a survey of newsworkers (Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman, 1976). These role definitions represent the majority of U.S. news institutions and newsworkers, and the majority are white. Exceptions to the media's noneducational role are noted in socialist media and media of developing countries (McQuail, 1977). The U.S. in the 1960s was a nation "moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal" (Kerner Commission, 1968: 1). In the developing society of inner cities in the 1960s, the specialized black media performed a consciously educational and participant role for its black readers. According to one Milwaukee black journalist, black "editors and staff writers . . . make the news as much as report it . . . . Unlike its major white counterpart, the role of the Black Press has historically exceeded that of information source" (Holt, 1981).

Black newspapers are a separate medium serving a separate and unequal society. Roshco (1975) states that the structure of society must change for its definition of news to change. In one nation becoming two societies by the 1960s, the general and specialized black media had different definitions of news. Of course, the majority society and its institutions, including the general media, were changing. But they were not changing swiftly enough for many blacks. The black press had changed its definition of news 140 years before the inner cities erupted in the 1960s riots.

The first black newspaper was founded in 1827 and more than 2,700 black papers since have underscored the racial separation of U.S. society (LaBrie, 1974). Readership is estimated at one of every five blacks in the country (Gordon, 1977). Other specialized media exist, from the foreign-language press predating black papers to the community press flourishing today. But specialized black media have been ignored or little noted by journalism historians and communication researchers. When noted at all, black papers are commonly treated as part of the community press since the black press fits, superficially, the definition of a community paper: "A weekly English-language publication addressed to the residents of a specific area of the urban metropolis" (Janowitz, 1967: 7).

Of about 200 black papers in 1981, most are urban weeklies. Total circulation for the largest 88 black papers alone was audited at more than two and a half million (Garland, 1982). There are a few to five black dailies, but black papers are among the largest-circulation weeklies in the U.S. (LaBrie, 1977-78). Black papers also resemble the community press in what Janowitz, author of the classic study of community papers, calls "details of parochial concern" (1967: 2). A "typical twenty-page black

newspaper" contains two pages of black business news, a page of church notes, a page of entertainment and social news, many photos and "is one way members of the community who will likely never see their names in the metropolitan daily can also gain some sort of recognition" (Pember, 1974: 346). Whites also turn to the community papers to read their own names or the news from next door. But Janowitz' hypotheses on the role of the community press clearly define the functional differences between the specialized media and the general media including the community press. Those functional differences are crucial to understanding the black papers' purpose, which continues to influence its practices and personnel and, therefore, its coverage.

Janowitz claims the community press starts with a commercial purpose. Newspapers traditionally rely on advertising, and secondly on subscriptions. The black press is comparatively low in advertising and subscriptions, relying instead on street sales (Stevens, 1974). Newspapers also cut costs within their own printing plants, which few black publishers can afford (Pember, 1974). Most black papers contract with white printers who can refuse controversial material, so outside production can bring editorial constraints (Stevens, 1970). But advertisers are a more common source of constraint, so the black press has been relatively free to editorialize against racial conflict (LaBrie, 1974).

The specialized black media started with the purpose of decrying racial conflict and achieving civil rights. Only rarely, and secondarily, have black papers achieved commercial success. This purpose sets the black papers apart from the community press. It also affects the other functions which Janowitz suggests are typical of the community press: emphasizing consensus on common values over solution of conflict, relying on cultural integration,

and complementing mass media by operating midway between major metropolitan papers and "word of mouth." The black press, with civil rights always uppermost, does foster consensus among blacks. But it gives equal emphasis to conflict with white society, thus relying on cultural segregation. And, it operates to replace rather than reinforce the general media's coverage of racial issues.

The black press is not, then, correctly categorized with the community press. Yet it also functions differently from general media. Lasswell (1948) in his classic study of media function specified three: surveillance, correlation and cultural transmission. Wright (1959) added a fourth function, entertainment. Both general and specialized black media perform these functions. However, a comparison of how they perform shows that the two types of media are as separate, and unequal, as the societies they serve.

The first black paper, Freedom's Journal, was founded in 1827 primarily to provide "pro-Negro" editorials in reaction to "Anti-Negro propaganda in the general press of New York City" (Pride, 1974: 41). "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us," the first issue's front page declared (Holt, 1981). But Freedom's Journal was also founded to provide news, because New York City's newspapers would not include news of and for blacks (LaBrie, 1974). Surveillance of the environment is defined as informing and providing news from extraordinary emergencies and events to everyday announcements (Severin and Tankard, 1979). General media did not fulfill even this most elementary function for blacks. A content analysis of Freedom's Journal from its first issue on March 16, 1827 through its three years of publication shows that the paper's primary purpose was abolition of slavery, which did take effect in New York State later that year

(Nordin, 1977-78). Several historians have accepted abolition, first in New York and then nationally, as Freedom's Journal's only purpose (Wolseley, 1971; Dann, 1971; Pride, 1951). But content analysis shows that "the concept of Freedom's Journal as an abolitionist or black protest publication is too narrow." The paper also "had a broader journalistic objective: to produce a nationally circulated newspaper which would develop . . . a black consciousness . . . among the freemen and ex-slaves living in scattered communities throughout the northern states" (Nordin, 1977-78: 124). This black consciousness was accomplished, the study concludes, through the reporting of black news still absent from the general media today.

Providing adequate surveillance of the black environment can even be a subtle act of correlation by the black press. The Ram's Horn was founded in New York City in 1836 by a black whose letter to the editor of the New York Sun was refused for publication because of his race (Fleming, 1972). The Ram's Horn was not as outspoken as Freedom's Journal. Yet it still advocated the "Negro cause" by its very existence, according to a scholar of the black press. He writes of covering the "cause:" The black newspaper "need not be a crusader to do this. It may do so purely by printing news about the Negro" (Pride, 1951: 185). Many black papers did actively crusade for specific civil rights, but at first only locally due to low literacy levels.

The founder of Freedom's Journal, John Russwurm (black minister Samuel Cornish shares credit in some sources), was in 1826 the first black to graduate from a U.S. college (Fleming, 1972). Russwurm's paper had to rely on white abolitionists for part of its 800 to 1,000 circulation, although white readership has been overestimated and was in the minority (Barrow, 1977-78). By 1850, the first time a census noted black literacy, only five

percent of blacks could read and write. The 1900 census showed that more than 55 percent of blacks had achieved literacy (LaBrie, 1977-78), which made national editions and campaigns possible. The black press was strictly localized before the "founder of the modern Negro press," Robert Abbott, founded the Chicago Defender in 1905. It was the first black weekly designed to appeal not only to black intellectuals but also to black masses, and it soon expanded across the country. When "national editions . . . appeared in the 1920s . . . the black press would both unify and lead the civil rights movement" (LaBrie, 1977-78: 112).

Crusading in print is the ultimate performance of Lasswell's correlation function, the "editorial and propaganda content" of a newspaper. The function is further defined for general media as the selection and interpretation of information which:

> serves to enforce social norms and maintain consensus . . . [but] can become dysfunctional when the media perpetuate stereotypes and enhance conformity, impede social change and innovation, minimize criticism, enforce majority views at the expense of minority opinions which are not aired, and preserve and extend power which may need to be checked (Severin and Tankard, 1959: 213).

Black papers editorialized and actively crusaded for rights in reaction to the "great white supremacy crusade carried on for scores of years . . . by much of the general press . . . . By omission, distortion, hyperbole and selected emphasis" (Pride, 1974: 40). Selecting its own emphasis, Freedom's Journal campaigned to purchase and free slaves from sympathetic owners, opposed the American Colonization Society and printed land offers for the formation of black communities (Barrow, 1977-78). The Washington Tribune in 1921, only two weeks after its founding, successfully fought segregation at the White House Easter egg roll and next won integration of the Washington Union Terminal dining room which was "for years, the only public place where Negroes could get

service" in the nation's capital (Walker, 1974: 19). The editor of the Washington Tribune later credited success to his "good spy ring . . . . Negro workers in committee rooms, dining room waiters and janitors, kept our paper informed with inside information. We kept up a running battle with southern Congressmen on racial issues" (Walker, 1974: 21). He was on the Cleveland Call and Post in 1933, and borrowed a slogan from a Chicago black paper. The "Don't Spend Your Money Where You Can't Work" campaign brought boycotts until blacks were hired by businesses. The Cleveland paper also joined other black papers in calling for freedom of the black "Scottsboro boys" unjustly accused of rape, and for integration of the armed forces in World War II (Walker, 1974). Black newspapers also crusaded for civil rights for other groups. The Chicago Defender denounced detention of 110,000 Japanese-Americans in World War II and "pointed out for any blacks who might have missed the point that someday the U.S. might be at war with, say, Liberia . . . and denounced any race baiters among the city's blacks who might fear competition from the newcomers for jobs" (Stevens, 1974: 34-5).

These crusades occurred "long before the sit-ins, the marchers and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., came on the scene," according to a black editor (Walker, 1974: 23). Black papers and black churches sometimes joined forces, but it was often an uncomfortable alliance. It may explain reluctance by some journalism scholars and practitioners to credit black minister Samuel Cornish with helping to found the first black paper. It was also the reason why black papers varied in performance of the correlation function across and within eras. Another black editor wrote that "While no one would take credit away" from the church or civil rights organizations, the black press "has been during the past 50 years the powerful instrument with which and through which all

these and others have effectively worked" (Prattis, 1974: 69). His jealousy is understandable because when general media finally focused on the civil rights movement in the 1960s, they headlined church leaders and organizations which no longer needed the black press. The church and press were "the two most formidable and aggressive lobbies and change agents throughout the civil rights movement" but became uncomfortable allies because:

> Often, they have tugged in opposite directions . . . . The church has primarily advocated that the good life is coming, and after death one would finally be rewarded. The black journalist, on the other hand, has opted for a here-and-now citizenship (LaBrie, 1974: 1).

Finally, growing professionalism and pride among black journalists caused a subtle split with the church. Often, the church and the press were the same, not only because church groups supplied a "ready readership" but more so because "with the clergymen quite often the most learned individuals in a particular community, it was quite natural for newspapers to be attached to religious groups and for the ministers to be editors" (Pride, 1951: 336). Such alliances continue into the contemporary black press. The Black Muslims' radical column in the Pittsburgh Courier "enraged the ministers whose congregations had been the paper's mainstay, and circulation dropped" (Garland, 1982). So in 1959 the group founded its own paper, Muhammad Speaks (Pember, 1974; Lincoln, 1973). But "minister-editors" were most typical of papers before the turn of the century, and lost this role as congregations gained in literacy. The change was literal for papers such as the Baltimore Afro-American founded by John Murphy in 1892. He turned it from a "Sunday School paper into a secular fighting organ" (Fleming, 1972: 76).

The modern era of the black press, starting with the Defender in 1905 (LaBrie, 1974), was more commercial but continued to emphasize correlation and provide surveillance. But it gave new emphasis to other functions of the

media: cultural transmission and entertainment. Both were bolstered by the "Harlem Renaissance" of the 1920s which opened doors for blacks previously constrained from pursuing careers in the arts. The 1920s saw the development of distinctly black literature, theater, music and more (Meier and Rudwick, 1970). However, black papers recognized black artists before the 1920s, particularly essayists and poets whose work was most easily brought to print. They often made their livings at newspapers. Frederick Douglass founded the North Star, Franklin Marshall Davis was editor of the Atlanta World and James Weldon Johnson was editor of the New York Age. Works by Gordon Parks, Martin Delaney and Countee Cullen were all featured in the black press. Langston Hughes was a columnist for the Chicago Defender. Most famous among them was Crisis editor W. E. B. DuBois, author of Souls of Black Folk (LaBrie, 1974).

The modern black papers' emphasis on African news is also a significant performance of the cultural transmission function. Even Freedom's Journal divided its news into "domestic" and "foreign" but the latter apparently also included news from nations of white heritage (Nordin, 1977-78). In 1919, Claude Barnett of the Chicago Defender founded the Associated Negro Press with 80 subscribers, including a few white dailies. By World War II, the ANP established an office in Washington, D.C. U.S. subscription peaked at 112 papers in 1945, dropped to a low of 60 in 1955 and was back up to 101 in 1964 when the service closed. In 1959, the ANP also offered a weekly package of U.S. blacks' news sent to 206 African subscribers in 1964. The ANP relied on clippings from black papers for its U.S. and African service. But it also had some correspondents around the U.S. and even more abroad: Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Nyasaland, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Haiti, Jamaica, the Canal Zone, the Virgin Islands, India, France and England.

In 1953 it also established a regular correspondent at the United Nations in New York to cover news of African nations, as well as of blacks in nearby Harlem (Beard and Zoerner, 1969: 47). Successors to the ANP have included the National Black News Service founded in 1972 with 70 subscribers and the All-African News Service founded in 1973 with 50 subscribers. About 18 black news services operated in the 1970s (LaBrie, 1974).

Black newspapers also began sending out their own correspondents in the 1920s. A black editor calls it the

> . . . big breakthrough . . . . Before that, news trickled back from contributors whose vacations led them to travel and who welcomed the chance to write back home about matters of importance they observed. Their voice was mostly one of protest and their news was restricted largely to coverage of events staged for the purpose of protest. There was no regular correspondence of news and worse, no planned correspondence. If the editor received a really good bit of reportage under such a system, he was more lucky than wise (Prattis, 1964: 70).

These advances contributed to a growing professionalism among black journalists with growing pride in their product (Prattis, 1974). Journalists, in turn, contributed to growing pride by black readers in their heritage. Pittsburgh Courier readers could, for example, read correspondent J. A. Rogers' on-the-scene accounts of the life of black Europeans in 1925 and 1927, of the coronation of Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie in 1930, of life in the Middle East and Africa then, of Spain in 1932, of Portugal in 1933. His coverage of the Italian-Ethiopian War in 1935-36 was the "first eyewitness, on-the-scene war reporting ever to be bought and paid for, at great cost, by a Negro newspaper," Prattis recalls (1974: 73). World War II, and the increased pressure by black press and organizations to integrate the armed forces, brought coverage by many black papers of the all-black units. Their particular perspective was also useful to the White House. In 1945, President Roosevelt asked representatives of the Baltimore Afro-American, Chicago Defender and Norfolk

Journal and Guide to report to him about their tour of western Africa (Stevens, 1974).

Integration of the armed forces was espoused by the NAACP as early as World War I and finally occurred in 1948 (Kellogg, 1967). Still, blacks had served in segregated units, and this increased their interest in news from overseas. Then, veterans' rediscovery of discrimination at home caused "tensions that sent black newspaper circulations to new records and onto new plateaus of development" (Pride, 1974: 42). Readers turned to the black press for their "weekly shot of black dignity in the forms of the Pittsburgh Courier and Chicago Defender" (Walker, 1974: 163). In answer to charges that the papers did not speak for the black masses and were too militant, a nationwide sample in 1943 found that 84 percent of blacks surveyed said the black press did accurately represent most blacks' views. Only 10 percent disagreed (Stevens, 1974). The black papers were at the height of their circulation and influence in the 1940s with "truly national weeklies, with regional editions distributed throughout much of the nation" (Stevens, 1974: 27). The Courier then led national papers with a circulation of 350,000, followed by the Defender at 230,000, the Afro-American at 170,000 and the Journal and Guide at 100,000. New papers were founded at a faster rate (Pride, 1974) and the black press was praised by Gunnar Myrdal in An American Dilemma as the "greatest single power in the Negro race" (Stevens, 1974: 27).

The increasing circulation and influence of the black press increased awareness of African heritage through foreign news into the 1950s. Many articles concerned Ghana, where in 1959 African blacks finally gained freedom after 400 years of colonial rule. Ghana's independence was a lesson of "tremendous influence" on American blacks, according to sit-in organizer and Freedom

Rider John Lewis (Viorst, 1979: 102-3). News from Ghana and other African nations continued to merit coverage by the black press through the 1970s, and "of late, it appears to be returning to its ethnic 'roots' with a renewed thrust, a stronger voice than at any time in history" (Holt, 1981: 37).

However, from the mid-1950s on, the black press had a domestic revolution to report. The civil rights movement it had helped to unify now tore a nation apart. Nationwide attention came first to Montgomery, Alabama, and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Viorst, 1979). Further actions also merited general media coverage in the 1950s. In 1957, blacks held the Washington, D.C. prayer pilgrimage where King gave his first national address (Lewis, 1978) and Congress passed the first civil rights bill since 1875 (Meier and Rudwick, 1970). In 1959, federal troops in Little Rock, Arkansas finally enforced the 1954 school desegregation decision (Viorst, 1979) and CORE staged its first sit-ins (Bell, 1968). In 1960, four black college students integrated a whites-only lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Sit-ins spread across the U.S. The decades-old tactic of "nonviolent direct action" was news, and general media were irrevocably committed to coverage of the civil rights movement (Viorst, 1979).

The black press faced the "unprecedented element of competition" (Garland, 1932: 46) at a difficult time. An observer wrote, "Now that the big race stories are everybody's story, the Negro papers are usually out last with the least" (Roshco, 1967: 6). The sit-in era was "baffling to the older generation . . . they not only lost control, they also lost touch" (Woodward, 1967: 33). There were accusations in the 1960s from blacks that their press, too, had lost touch with the times. Rapid turnover of terminology and leadership in the civil rights movement may have caused an "awareness lag" even in

the specialized black media. Young blacks found that "Editorial opposition to . . . the Stokely Carmichael-H. Rap Brown brand of militancy was seemingly unanimous" (Roshco, 1967: 7). Attention to leaders already past their power, according to research on the "awareness lag" before the 1960s riots, could contribute to "communication breakdowns which can lead to mutual miscalculations and ultimately to civic violence" (Pfautz, 1962: 156).

Covering the civil rights movement was costly. In the early 1960s the black press no longer enjoyed the commercial success of the 1940s generally, although some papers prospered including the Defender which went daily in 1956 (Hynds, 1975). There were only 133 black papers in 1964 (Sim, 1969). A black reporter at the Pittsburgh Courier in the 1960s recalls the result of poor management and escalating production costs:

> . . . the paper could not afford to send its writers out to cover what were to emerge as some of the biggest black stories of the century . . . . Some had even come to question whether the black press might be able to survive . . . . Sometimes I believe that I arrived on the scene at the end of its golden age. Much of the glory had gone . . . (Garland, 1974: 177-179).

However, while other specialized media such as foreign-language papers declined (Gordon, 1977), the black press in the 1960s recovered and readership of all black papers was estimated at over four million in the later 1960s (LaBrie, 1974). In 1967, there were 171 black papers. Two were dailies: the Atlanta World had 30,100 audited circulation and the Chicago Defender had 29,714 daily and 34,251 weekends. New York's Amsterdam News was the largest commercial weekly with 72,399 circulation. Other large weeklies were the Pittsburgh Courier, the Detroit Michigan Chronicle, the Los Angeles Sentinel, the Baltimore Afro-American and the Cleveland Call and Post (Roshco, 1967). Defender publisher and Abbott's heir John Sengstacke purchased his paper's largest rival, the Pittsburgh Courier chain, in 1966 (Hynds, 1975) and soon claimed a

combined circulation of over 200,000 (Palmer, 1970), as did the Afro-American (Pember, 1974). They were dwarfed by the claimed circulation of the Muslims' Muhammad Speaks which ranged from 400,000 to 700,000 in the early 1970s (Palmer, 1970; LaBrie, 1973).

A demographic survey of black newspaper readership in San Francisco in 1963 identifies some reasons for rebirth of the black press. Again, an increasing number of educated blacks were looking for a perspective only the black press provided. In the 1963 survey, about 80 percent of blacks sampled read at least one of three black weeklies in San Francisco because the city's dailies did not include news of blacks. Almost half said they "needed" the black press and readers had a higher level of education and employment than did most blacks. Respondents still trusted the black press more than they did the general media (Lyle, 1967).

As the 1960s ended in riots and King's assassination, the civil rights movement and the black press were in flux. Baltimore Afro-American publisher John Murphy admits that by the 1970s the black papers were no longer "spearheads of protest . . . . Today, we're more informational" (Palmer, 1970)--more like general media in emphasizing surveillance over correlation and cultural transmission. One study claims the black press was becoming more moderate in tone because editors tried to "hold their older readers without alienating their younger, more radical readers" (Stevens, 1970: 568). Its content analysis in 1970 of 14 black papers from around the U.S., including the Milwaukee Star, shows that the black press was in transition. Racial harmony received more emphasis, with 60 percent of the news hole, than did racial conflict. This is the reverse of general media cooperation-conflict ratios (Stevens, 1970).

More recently, since the Kerner Commission in 1968 castigated general media for nonrepresentation of blacks, some claim the black papers are no longer getting the best black journalists. Many have been hired away by general media offering better salaries. The black press is no longer the "common route" to general media, and "For younger black journalists . . . there are too many competing lures" (Garland, 1982: 47). Due to competition by general media in coverage of black news or hiring of black reporters, or to the rapidly rising circulations of black magazines, there was doubt "Whether the black newspapers of the early 1970s had the influence ascribed to such publications by Myrdal in the early 1940s" (Hynds, 1975: 105). However, the counts indicate increases during the decade in both the number and circulation of black papers (LaBrie, 1973, 1974, 1977-78). A 1979 survey in Los Angeles showed that reasons for black press readership varied little from the nationwide sample in 1943 and the San Francisco survey in 1963. Respondents still relied on the black press for its particular perspective, and trusted it more than general media (Allen and Bielby, 1979). Proven success stories have occurred among new black papers, as of the 20-year-old Sacramento Observer. In 1982, a new national black weekly, the National Leader, was financed by the nation's largest black broadcast company, and its publisher is a veteran black journalist who came from the general media and never had a job in the black press (Garland, 1982). So, the future of the black press may rely upon unforeseen sources.

If the history of the black press teaches anything, it is that new sources for revitalization will not resemble those predicted for the community press or the general media. Their commercial purposes, still a secondary motive for black papers, lead media sages to foresee future success resulting

from new technologies in preparation, production and circulation of the news. The purposes of the black papers, like those of all media, change with the society they serve--but remain ideological instead of commercial. Several historians of the black press have suggested that at separate times its purposes were symbiotic with black causes, from abolition to civil rights. However, none has systematically traced these purposes throughout eras of black growth or tied them to shifts in black ideology.

LaBrie, one of the foremost scholars of the black press, advanced its study by defining distinct eras in history. In the first growth period, from 1827 until emancipation in 1863, about 50 black papers were founded. The second growth period, from 1870 to 1905, was by far the most productive as 1,200 black papers were founded in 35 years. In the third period, from 1905 to the present, about 1,500 black papers were founded. Only nine founded before 1900 survived into the 1970s. Three were religious journals and six were commercial papers: the Philadelphia Tribune founded in 1885, the Baltimore Afro-American, Dallas Express and Houston Informer (formerly the Texas Freeman) all founded in 1892, the Des Moines New Iowa Bystander in 1893 and the Indianapolis Recorder founded in 1895 (LaBrie, 1977-78). LaBrie defines each period by the emergence of new papers whose publishers sought new readerships. In the first period, black papers were supported by abolitionists, in the second period by church groups. Both started papers for propaganda purposes. In the third period, when publishers could look to newly literate black masses, commercial purposes helped the black press to grow. However, papers were still founded more often for the purpose of correlation.

LaBrie also discusses the varying purposes of the black press, but does not clearly link purposes to growth periods. His chronology, however, clearly

can be related to blacks' progress. Blacks and their papers had the purpose of abolition until emancipation was achieved in 1863. Black minister-editors preached accommodation from 1870 to 1905. Then "Jim Crow" laws convinced blacks that accommodation invited terrorism, and in the third period the papers emphasized civil rights and equality.

The changing purposes of the black press become even clearer when linked not to events in the civil rights movement but, instead, to its ideologies. Purposes overlapped over time as they did in the civil rights movement which, according to Lewis (1978), had "recurrent ideological positions' of militance, migration, meekness and merit. All were evident in Freedom's Journal. It editorialized for abolition, it opposed colonization, it acquiesced to certain aspects of the status quo and it promoted strategies for self-improvement among blacks (Dann, 1971). These ideologies are still seen in the contemporary black press, with the exception of migration. However, emphasis on black heritage and news of African nations might be a modern replacement for the colonization movement. Over the more than 150-year history of the black press, each ideology alternately gained public attention, if not unanimous support.

Lewis links the different ideologies to black leaders of different eras who can also be linked to the growth periods of the black press. In the first growth period until emancipation, abolitionist papers matched the militance of what Lewis calls the Vesey-Turner ideology, named for leaders of slave rebellions. After the Civil War and during the Reconstruction, the growth of black church papers in the second period of the black press indicates more emphasis on meekness than on militance. The phenomenal rise in literacy from five percent of blacks in 1850 to 55 percent in 1900 also indicates belief in the ideology of merit. Lewis links the ideology of meekness to Booker T. Washing-

ton. He was in his heyday at the turn of the century with a philosophy of accommodation to rising prejudice, Jim Crow laws and lynchings. Washington's espousal of vocational education for blacks also emphasizes the value of merit. However, Lewis instead links the ideology of merit to Frederick Douglass in the 1800s and to W. E. B. DuBois in this century. DuBois' emergence as a leader coincided with the beginning of the third growth period of the black press in 1905, when he founded the Niagara Movement, predecessor to the NAACP, and the first of two newspapers to promote his organization. DuBois was a proponent of the ideology of merit, but he was also important in returning the civil rights movement--and the black press--to the ideology of militance. In 1910, DuBois became editor of the NAACP's periodical, Crisis, and was a strident voice for decades (Kellogg, 1967).

There were exceptions to trends in each era, such as church papers and Negro World which promoted migration. Lewis calls the ideology of migration "Delaney-Garveyism" for its early spokesman in the 1800s and for Marcus Garvey in the 1920s. Garvey's aberrant espousal of migration brought his paper, the World, a circulation estimated at 200,000 (Cronon, 1955). Despite the paper's popularity, Lewis determines migration was a recurrent ideology which, although recurrent, never gained dominance.

Militance remains the primary purpose of the black press, as of the civil rights movement, in this century. The NAACP and DuBois deserve credit for the developing militancy, but both relied on a black journalist who was clearly ahead of his time. Booker T. Washington's accommodationist philosophy dominated the decade of the 1890s, but in 1887 a new mood was forecast in an editorial by T. Thomas Fortune of the New York Freeman. The former slave listed six objectives for his Afro-American League. The list was later adopted

almost word for word in the NAACP charter drafted by DuBois in 1908. A phrase from Fortune's 1887 editorial was plaintive but promised change: "We have been patient so long . . ." (Thornbrough, 1961: 499).

Change has come, but not quickly enough for many blacks, and their papers, who are increasingly impatient. The black newspaper chains continue to dominate weekly papers in the U.S., and the black press clearly continues to find and fulfill a need. Just as the direction of the civil rights movement cannot be predicted, the future of the black press is not certain. However, it will no doubt again differ from that of general media and the community press. The same study which found a more moderate tone in the black press of the late 1960s also notes the rise of new and less "establishment-oriented" black papers in several cities, including the Community Journal in Milwaukee (Stevens, 1970). That paper's editor recently wrote that the black press in the 1980s is experiencing drastic increases in readership and "has become more urbanized in nature, in part because of its large college student readership . . . its voice is once again being called upon to serve as the vanguard for social change" (Holt, 1981). Again, a strong editorial stance is sought by the increasingly educated black audience.

Other skeptics suggest that blacks who move away from the inner city will then abandon readership of the black press. However, the vast majority of American blacks still live in the inner city and its separate society. For them, the general media still fail to provide sufficient news of blacks and the black perspective on news. That failure explains why black papers started for different purposes than did general media, and continue to emphasize different functions. That failure also explains why the black press can be expected to take a path apart from the general media, as it has throughout the history

which a black journalist calls "the sub-cultural glory of an institution that surely must stand as one of the finest and most courageous of the black man's endeavors in this land" (Garland, 1974: 170).

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